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SECURITY INFORMATION

*History*  
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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Proposed changes in draft circulated 29 November 1952

I. Change title to read:

ESTIMATE OF LIKELIHOOD OF GENERAL WAR WITHIN THE NEXT DECADE

II. For paragraph I, substitute the following:

Although general war is not inevitable, we believe that in the present world situation the odds are greater than even that general war will come within the next decade. The cold war will soon enter its eighth year. The armaments race is intense. Ideological differences and the Iron Curtain prevent both normal diplomatic negotiation between the governments and contact between the peoples of the Bloc and of the West. This situation, if continued, will involve ever-increasing tensions, with the likelihood that general war will result. There is widespread fear of a war fought with atomic weapons, but similar fears have existed before, and they have not prevented war. At best, the existing hostility between the Soviet Bloc and the Western nations headed by the US will almost certainly continue. The rulers of the USSR assume that capitalism and communism cannot continue to co-exist indefinitely, and that a peaceful settlement between the Bloc and the West is impossible.

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The Communists accept the possibility of periods of stalemate, or even of periods when retreat becomes a tactical necessity for communism. But it would be unsafe to assume that even the most cynical communist would accept a general settlement with the West, or even a relaxation of tension, except as a temporary tactical maneuver.

III. Omit paragraph 10.

IV. Re-number other paragraphs to conform with these proposed changes.